

**Balance of State
Regional Continuum of Care Meetings
2013 Winter Meeting Minutes**

Meetings started generally at 9 or shortly thereafter.

Karia Basta, ADOH Special Needs Administrator, welcomed participants and had people sign-in.

Participants did introductions with affiliations.

Karia Basta, ADOH lead staff person for Balance of State Continuum of Care gave overview for those first time attendees and as a reminder to those who have attended previously.

Discussed goals to end homelessness rather than manage homelessness as well as decreasing barriers to housing. Described how the HEARTH Act not only reauthorizes homeless funding but actually replaces the McKinney-Vento Act. The Statewide Continuum of Care Grant Application was successfully submitted on the deadline, January 18th, 2013.

Ms. Basta briefly describes how ADOH is the lead agency for the AZ Balance of State CoC and that for the past two years, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) training has been conducted in conjunction with the Balance of State meeting. She iterated how the two work together. There is no Continuum without HMIS and no HMIS without a Continuum. She also emphasized how the "Continuum" is everyone who has a vested interest in ending homelessness, it's not ADOH and it's not only the agencies receiving HUD funding.

A short break was held so that participants could go to the respective part of the meeting: COC or HMIS training which was held in an adjoining room. Scott Rich of Symmetric Solutions conducted the training.

Upon reconvening, Karia discussed the BOS COC application, funds applied for, the organizations in the application and the tier system. (See handout) It was noted that 2 Transitional Housing Programs scored 1st and 2nd in Tier One. They scored high on the employment goal which might be because TH programs have participants that are able to work whereby the PH programs have participants with disabilities and increasing their income through SSI is the usual achievement. One PH renewal program wound up in Tier 2 as what will be funded was the renewal demand minus 3.5%. If the application scores well enough (98 or more out of 130 points) then the programs in Tier 2 will be funded. In addition to the renewal program, the planning proposal, two bonus projects and a RRH project, all in Tier 2, would be funded for a total of 4.1 million. In Tier 1, 19 out of 29 programs are Permanent Housing according to the BOS COC Priority and Submission List distributed to the meeting participants.

Karia presented upcoming challenges and requirements that the BOS COC must address as part of the HEARTH Act and prior to the next HUD COC application. There are Committees in place meeting on these issues and there is always room for additional members. (Handout on next set of meetings with names and emails of Chair person.)

- The need for an Operations/Guidance Committee to put written policies and procedures in place for planning and strategy to work together in a cohesive, strategic manner to reduce episodes of homelessness and work to end homelessness. HUD calls it a “Governance Charter”. This work must produce evidence that the Board selected by the Continuum of Care meets the requirements of § 578.5(b); (ii) Evidence that the Continuum has been established and operated as set forth in subpart B of this part, including published agendas and meeting minutes, an approved Governance Charter that is reviewed and updated annually, a written process for selecting a board that is reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years, etc. Mike Hutchison of Horizon, Mike McCluskey of ACHIEVE and Gina Whittington of WACOG joined this committee at various regional meetings.
- The need to implement a Coordinated Assessment tool to use statewide for coordination of program participant intake, assessment and provision of referrals. The goal behind this is that when assessment procedures, intake forms, and processes are made consistent across agencies we will be better able to determine appropriate solutions for each individual or family. AZ 211 could be the design for the centralized intake tools but there are others and the committee will be examining options. Hope they can make a recommendation by the October statewide meeting.
- HEARTH also has some new rules regarding HMIS. It will regulate the administration of HMIS and collection of data. There might not be too many changes for current HMIS participants as the BOS COC has had only one system since HMIS began and regulations have been followed. HMIS is and remains a system of accuracy, integrity, and confidentiality. However, written policies will be updated and posted. The code of ethics will be updated and as always data quality is a high priority.
- Membership is the fourth committee. HEARTH designates relevant organizations to be part of the Continuum. They include nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, and organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals.
This is where the need for local continuums to be active, vital and structured could be very helpful. There are local continuums in about five counties. If they were willing to be part of the larger Continuum then their membership could help to fill these roles.

There is a need to set clear performance measures have evidence-based outcomes, collect pertinent and relevant data which will assist all communities as they strive to end homelessness and improve their communities.

Karia discussed the Unsheltered Count, scheduled for January 29, 30, 31 and the need to participate. She announced that during the summer of 2012 an unsheltered Statewide Count took place and all 9 BOS counties submitted data. That hadn’t happened in many years, if ever. The goal is for numbers to go down which shows evidence that we are impacting homelessness in a positive way. The BOSCOG will have a baseline from which to assess performance of programs

with the June and January point in time counts. All data will be shared with the entire continuum.

Frank Migali, State Coordinator for Homeless Education, Department of Education presented an overview of McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as it relates to education. HEARTH has not replaced McKinney Vento in Education law. He stressed how the law provides for students to stay in their school of origin if at all feasible. Terms were defined and examples given. Since a student loses about 4 months every time there is a school change, staying in one school is crucial. The law covers both public and charter schools. Though there is limited funding, which is distributed through competitive grant process, the law must be abided by all schools without or without benefit of McKinney Vento funds.. He stated more information can be gotten from azed.gov. One can access a list of liaisons by school districts in the state on the website as well.

Joan Serviss, Executive Director of the Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness gave an overview about the AZCEH. Then she presented the new initiative AZ Permanent Housing Programs, sponsored by the ADOH. This is a database through socialserve.com that initially is for Case Managers and housing professionals assisting with identifying housing opportunities for clients. The goal is to assist people, especially those with special needs, to locate affordable housing much of it service enriched housing. It also will provide data as to what people are in need of that doesn't exist so that resources can be better directed to fill all housing needs. Users must register and do this through socialserve.com. Participants were given the opportunity to register after the conclusion of the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00pm.

HMIS Minutes: DES provided background on the 2-1-1 phone system, a statewide 24-hour referral for human services that is being used as the initial point of contact for ESG funding. Symmetric Solutions (SSI) walked through the referral process from 2-1-1 to seven ESG subrecipient agencies in the balance of state counties and provided detailed instructions for ESG data entry into HMIS. The referrals appear on a dashboard report in HMIS the next day. An ART license is needed to see the dashboard; there is at least one license with each ESG agency now. If there are dashboard issues, contact Margaret Kilman/ DES and copy Scott Rich/SSI to keep him in the loop. Once it's in HMIS, contact Peggy/SSI helpdesk with issues. All those present know how to make contact.